

OUTER HARBOUR — COCKBURN SOUND

**270. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Fisheries:**

Thank you very much for the call, Madam Speaker. I almost drifted off then.

I refer to the comments from the member for Cockburn in this place during the debate on the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill on 3 June about pressure on Cockburn Sound, and I quote —

Mussel aquaculture has reduced in productivity from production levels of over 700 tonnes in early 2000 to below 200 tonnes in recent years ...

I also refer to the closure of the snapper and southern garfish fisheries.

If Cockburn Sound fisheries are already under pressure, what impact will the outer harbour have on recreational and commercial fisheries in Cockburn Sound?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**Mr D.T. PUNCH replied:**

I thank the member for the question. I am shocked that I have actually been asked a question in this place! Thank you very much, member, for my first question.

As I explained in the second reading speech on the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021, and in response to the member's question, this government has a very strong commitment to science and research. In response to the proposals for Cockburn Sound, we are investing significantly in researching the potential impacts, if any, on Cockburn Sound. This is one of the answers to the member's question. We have also invested in marine science research, which will start in July.

In regard to mussels, as the member will know, Cockburn Sound waters are considerably cleaner than they have been in the past, which makes it difficult to grow mussels, but I am very happy to provide the member with further information on the mussel issue should he wish it.